

CALENDAR OF THE EGYPTIAN FARMER BOOK in

Lamenta-
tions of
Indians
at
cutting
sacred
wood.

sacred wood for the fire in the assembly-
room. The
wood must be cut from a tree on the top of
the highest
hill. In lopping off the boughs the Indian
weeps and
sobs piteously, shedding real tears, and at the
top of the
tree he leaves two branches and a top-knot,
resembling
a man's head and " outstretched arms. Having
descended
from the tree, he binds the wood in a faggot
and carries
it back to the assembly-room, blubbering all
the way.
If he is asked why he thus weeps at cutting and
fetching the
sacred fuel, he will either give no answer or say
simply that
he does it for luck.¹ We may suspect that his
real motive
is to appease the wrath of the tree-spirit,
many of whose
limbs he has amputated, though he took care
to leave him
two arms and a head.

Arab
ceremon-
y of
burying
the
old
man " at
harves-
t.

The conception of the corn-spirit as old and
dead at
harvest is very clearly embodied in a custom
observed by
the Arabs of Moab. When the harvesters
have nearly
finished their task and only a small corner of
the field
remains to be reaped, the owner takes a
handful of wheat
tied up in a sheaf. A hole is dug in the form
of a grave,
and two stones are set upright, one at the
head and the
other at the foot, just as in an ordinary burial.
Then the
sheaf of wheat is laid at the bottom of the
grave, and
the sheikh pronounces these words, " The old
man is dead.⁵¹
Earth is afterwards thrown in to cover the
sheaf, with a
prayer, " May Allah bring us back the wheat of
the dead." -

¹ S. Powers, *Tribes of California* *Revue Biblique*, i, 1897, ii 1903, p. 258;
(Washington, 1877), p. 25. *id.*, *Coutumes des Arabes ait*
pays (fa

² A.
Jausse
n,
"Coutu
mes
Arabe
s,"
Moab
(Paris
1908),
pp.
252
sq.